Dipterocarpus tempehes (Dipterocarpaceae) – A New Record for Singapore

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The extreme dry weather conditions in the early part of this year triggered mast flowering of many trees in Singapore. Dipterocarps, many of which are known to flower heavily once in 5–10 years, produced flowers by the millions in many parts of Singapore. These particular trees were previously mistaken for *Dipterocarpus sublamellatus* Foxw. because of their similar leaves. When conducting regular surveys, in June 2005 the National Parks Board staff of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, came across a strange and wingless dipterocarp fruit along MacRitchie Nature Trail.

On consulting the literature and the herbarium collection of the Singapore Herbarium (SING), these specimens (MacRitchie Nature Trail - *Aidi A.G. SING2005-246* 29 June 2005 (SING), *SING 2005-259* 11 July 2005 (SING); *Lua H.K. SING2005-290* 16 July 2005 (SING)) appeared to be identical with *Dipterocarpus tempehes* Sloot. P.S. Ashton (*pers. comm.*) confirmed its identity. However, according to Newman *et al.* (1995) and Symington (2004), this species has never been recorded from Singapore or Peninsular Malaysia, respectively.

Prior to this find, *Dipterocarpus tempehes* was known to be endemic only in Borneo (Ashton, 1982, 2004; Meijer and Wood, 1964; Newman *et al.*, 1998), where it is found in periodic swamps and along stream banks.

This is a new significant record for Singapore. In total, there are five mature trees towering above 35 m just off the nature trail. Similar in morphology to the Bornean ones, its habitat in Singapore is different. It is possible that the MacRitchie Nature Trail could have been swampy in the past, judging by the species composition of the primary forest patch near the streamlet. However, the area is now by and large moist and gently sloping, with no periodic inundations.

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Figure 1. *Dipterocarpus tempehes* Sloot. a. fruit; b. leafy shoots with old infructescence. (from *Aidi SING2005-259*).

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